Second Sunday of Advent — December 5, 2021

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

If St. Luke were writing this Gospel today, he would not include the names of Tiberius Caesar, and Annas and Caiaphas, and the rest of them. Rather he would use the name of the Pope, the President, and perhaps the mayor. That would be his way of giving his message a realistic and historical context. He would then proclaim to us that the word of God is coming to us, that the Lord is near, and that we must prepare the way for him.

As a matter of fact, this description is not a mere imagination on my part. There is precise truth in it. The word of God comes to us during the mass just as surely as it did to St. John the Baptist in the wilderness. That word tells us that the Lord is near and that we must prepare for his coming. We must be prepared for the celebration of his coming. We must be prepared of his coming at Christmas so that we will be prepared for his coming at the end of time.

The only catch is that we have to be prepared; that is the warning that the word of God gives us today. It has now become a cliché to observe that we must keep Christ in Christmas. We all know how materialism has taken over. I do not say that we should do away with all the decorations and the gift giving. If we did, our economy would collapse. More importantly, a lot of the spirit of joy and enthusiasm surrounding Christmas would probably be lost. We should reconsider once again the whole situation. We have to have the right attitude.

This Christmas, Jesus will just as truly come to us as he did to the people of the Gospel story. Jesus was born many centuries ago, but this Christmas through the Liturgy, he will be born once again in our hearts, and he will bring to us his love, his truth, and his help. But we have to be ready for him. We simply cannot afford to pass him up, to fail to recognize him, to say that there is no room in our lives for him. Do we need Jesus, I can hardly think of a time when we needed him more? The whole world needs him, and each one of us in particular needs him.

Why do we decorate? Because we want to celebrate the coming of the Savior. It is a happy occasion. We just have to remember why we decorate in a spirit of joy. Why do we give gifts? It should be in commemoration of the greatest gift God has given us: God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son. Our gift giving at Christmas should be an imitation of the great generosity of God our Father.

But above all we must try to make our Christmas primarily a religious experience by letting the Christmas Mass be the center of our celebration. I suggest that we plan our day around the Mass rather than our Christmas dinner. It is the spirit of the way in which we approach the Mass that will make the difference. The Church teaches us that Advent is more than a preparation for Christmas; it is also a preparation for the final coming of Christ. All that we do now prepares us for the final coming. The way in which we try to make Christmas primarily a religious experience, the Christian spirit of generosity and joy with which we give gifts and decorate our homes -all these are meant to direct us to the final coming of Christ.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**December 7**	**11:00AM**
Frank Manas †		ICF #14
Wed.	**December 8**	**11:00AM**
Czarina Clara Lacsina		Bernas Family
Thur.	**December 9**	**11:00AM**
Ric Liquid †		Jenny
Fri.	**December 10**	**11:00AM**
Bill McFarling †		ICF #14
Sat.	**December 11**	**4:30PM**
Teddy & Steve Gallo†		June
Sun.	**December 12**	**9:00AM**
Edgar Allan (birthday)		Mom & Dad
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
People of the Parish		

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